



President Signs Legislation on January 11th to Clean Environment & Create Jobs

President Bush visited the Millennium Corporate Center in Conshohocken, Pennsylvania to sign bipartisan legislation that will encourage the cleanup and redevelopment of old industrial properties cleaning up our environment, creating new jobs and protecting small businesses from frivolous lawsuits.

The President also announced that his FY 03 budget will double the funds available through the EPA in FY 02 – from \$98 million to \$200 million - to help states and communities around the country clean up and revitalize brownfields sites. This is an example of budgeting resources for programs that get results.

The President's FY 03 budget also includes \$25 million in funding for urban redevelopment and brownfields cleanup through the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

And, the President's budget proposes to permanently extend the Brownfields Tax Incentive, which encourages the redevelopment of brownfields. According to government estimates, the \$300 million annual investment in the Brownfields Tax Incentive will leverage approximately \$3.4 billion in private investment and return 8,000 brownfields to productive use.

Background on Presidential Action

Brownfields are abandoned or underutilized industrial or commercial properties where redevelopment is hindered by possible environmental contamination and potential liability under Superfund for parties that purchase or operate these sites.

The Environmental Protection Agency estimates that between 500,000 and one million brownfields tarnish the landscapes of communities across America, typically in urban areas. Spurring more effective and efficient cleanup and redevelopment of brownfields will:

Remove environmental hazards from communities; Relieve pressure to develop pristine open space and farmland; and Revitalize communities by creating jobs and returning productive property to local tax rolls.

Located 20 minutes from Philadelphia on the banks of the Schuylkill River, the Millennium Corporate Center is the 1,000th site redeveloped under Pennsylvania's Land Recycling Program. The Center is built on the former site of the Schuylkill Iron Works, and, when completed, it will be the centerpiece of a 40-acre, \$115 million office, recreation and residential development. More than 500 people already work at the new development.

Some 40 states have developed voluntary programs that are cleaning up hundreds of brownfield sites faster and more effectively, and with less litigation, than under the federal Superfund program. These programs set high cleanup standards and provide liability protection under state law for new owners and operators of brownfields sites.

However, these state programs have been hindered by the lack of liability protection in federal law. Under Superfund, owners and operators of a contaminated property can be held liable for the cost of cleanup, regardless of whether they actually caused any of the contamination. This potential liability creates a strong incentive for businesses to avoid redeveloping brownfields.

The U.S. Conference of Mayors, in its February 2000 brownfields survey, *Recycling America's Land*, called for a national commitment to recycle the thousands of brownfields in America's cities. They

estimated that cleanup and redevelopment of brownfields could generate \$2.4 billion in new tax revenues.

The Small Business Liability Relief and Brownfields Revitalization Act reforms the major hindrance to brownfields cleanup -- the federal Superfund law. The bill provides liability protection for prospective purchasers, contiguous property owners, and innocent landowners and authorizes increased funding for state and local programs that assess and clean up brownfields.

The legislation also provides common sense relief from Superfund liability for small business owners who sent waste or trash to waste sites, protecting innocent small businesses while ensuring that polluted sites continue to be cleaned up by those most responsible for the contamination.

President Bush called for Superfund reform during his campaign, and worked to craft a bipartisan solution to the problem of contaminated and abandoned brownfields. Overcoming years of legislative gridlock on this common sense issue, Congress approved the bipartisan bill without opposition in December 2001.

For more of the EPA Newsroom Headline Story, visit
http://www.epa.gov/epahome/headline_011102.htm

For the Remarks by the President in Signing of H.R. 2869, the Small Business Liability Relief and Brownfields Revitalization Act, visit www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/01/20020111-3.html

For the Remarks of Governor Christine Todd Whitman, Administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, at the signing of H.R. 2869, The Small Business Liability Relief and Brownfields Revitalization Act at Conshohocken, Pennsylvania on January 11, 2002, visit
<http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/html-doc/bflegsta.htm>

For more information on and the text of the Small Business Liability Relief and Brownfields Revitalization Act (H.R. 2869) Legislation, visit EPA's summary page at:
<http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/sblrbra.htm>

For general information on the U.S. EPA's Brownfields Program, visit: <http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/>